

REMARKS

An Office Action was mailed on December 30, 2003. Claims 1-17 and 19-26 are pending.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to consider the IDS filed January 23, 2004, and acknowledge the same by initialing, signing, dating and returning the PTO-FORM 1449 with the next official communication.

Claims 1-7, 15-21, 24, 25 and 27 are now rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Brandenburg et al. (U.S. Patent 6,180,045) in view of Phillips et al. '455, while claims 8-14, 22, 23 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Brandenburg et al. in view of Phillips et al. and further in view of Hood, III et al. (U.S. Patent 6,049,469). Responsive thereto, Applicant has amended all of the claims so that the "connecting strips" are each provided with a "front surface and a back surface in a shape of a plate, and an edge of the front surface and an edge of the back surface in said tip portion side are formed in a shape of an arc in approximate point contact with said ground." Support for such amendment is found in any of the drawings illustrating the connecting strips of the present invention

This type of connecting strip configuration is not disclosed in any of the cited prior art references. In the present case, as described above, the tip portion shape of the connecting strip is an arc, and thus the contacting area approximates a point. Therefore, even though the flux remains on the ground, the flux can be removed in the process of grounding the connecting strips. This particular effect is discussed in the specification in the paragraph bridging pages 9 and 10:

Fig. 4B shows the state where the connecting strips 104 are brought into press contact with the ground pattern 201. The elasticity of the connecting strips 104 ensures that the tip 104a of the connecting strips 104 slightly open outward so as to exhibit warped shapes. There may be flux in the shape of thin film left on the ground pattern 201. In such a case, the flux should be scrubbed away before connecting them electrically. However, as described above, when the shielding plate 100 of the present invention is fixed to the printed board 200, the connecting strips 104 open outward, thus scrubbing residual flux away accordingly. It ensures the electrical connection between the shielding plate 100 and the printed board 200. Therefore, it is not necessary to remove the flux away in advance before the shielding plate 100 of the present invention is

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fixed onto the printed board 200. In other words, contact between the connecting strips 104 and the ground pattern 201 is ensured without removing flux in advance.

Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art fails to teach or reasonably suggest the claimed invention including the connecting strip structure as claimed. Brandenburg et al. '045 and Philips et al. '455 each teach connecting strips that make line contact with a ground, while Hood, III, et al. '469 teaches connecting strips that make line or plate contact with a ground. With a line or plate contact, the flux can not be removed in the process of grounding the connecting strips. Accordingly, while the prior art clearly fails to teach the claimed invention including the connecting strips as claimed, one skilled in the art would not consider the claimed invention to be obvious in view of the teachings of any of the prior art references asserted by the Examiner. The prior art simply fails to teach or reasonably suggest the structure of associated benefits of the claimed connecting strips as set forth above.

Applicant further submits that there is no suggestion of the desirability to combine the Brandenburg et al. and Phillips et al. and/or Hood, III, et al. references, nor is there any motivation demonstrated in either of the references to combine them, nor is there any suggestion in either reference to adapt their structures to the unique construction of the present invention as claimed, since none of the references disclose or discuss benefits achieved from connecting strips having an approximate point contact as from an arc-shaped end. Thus, to combine the teachings of two or three references that are distinct from the claimed invention in this critical feature can only result in a combined teaching that is also distinct from the claimed invention, particularly with respect to such a critical feature. For the foregoing reasons, reconsideration of the §103(a) rejections is respectfully requested.

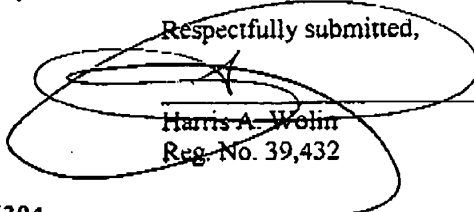
An earnest effort has been made to be fully responsive to the Examiner's objections. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that claims 1-6, 8-12, 14, 17 and 19-27, consisting of independent claims 1, 17, 19 and 24 and the claims dependent therefrom, are in condition for allowance. Passage of this case to allowance is earnestly solicited. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

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Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,


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